The Cambridge Companion to Byron

Byron's life and work have fascinated readers around the world for two hundred years, but it is the complex interaction between his art and his politics, beliefs and sexuality that has attracted so many modern critics and students. In three parts devoted to the historical, textual and literary contexts of Byron's life and times, these specially commissioned essays by a range of eminent Byron scholars provide a compelling picture of the diversity of Byron's writings. The essays cover topics such as Byron's interest in the East, his relationship to the publishing world, his attitudes to gender, his use of Shakespeare and eighteenth-century literature, and his fit in a postmodernist world. This Companion provides an invaluable resource for students and scholars, including a chronology and a guide to further reading.
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CHRONOLOGY

1778
John Byron elopes with Amelia D’Arcy, Marchioness Carmarthen.
William Hazlitt b.; Voltaire d.; Rousseau d.

1779
John Byron marries Marchioness Carmarthen.
Thomas Moore b.; John Galt b.; David Garrick d.

1780
Gordon Riots.

1781
British surrender at Yorktown;
Schiller’s Die Räuber; Kant’s Kritik der reinen Vernunft (Critique of Pure Reason).

1782
Laclos, Liaisons Dangereuses;
James Watt patents his double-acting steam engine.

1783
Birth of Augusta Byron, daughter of John Byron and Amelia D’Arcy.
Peace of Versailles; The Paris Peace Treaty; Britain recognises United States of America; Stendhal b.; Crabbe’s The Village; Montgolfier brothers’ hot-air balloon flights in Paris.

1784
Lady Carmarthen dies.
Leigh Hunt b.; Samuel Johnson d.; Diderot d.; Wesley establishes Methodism.
### Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>John Byron marries Catherine Gordon (13 May).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thomas de Quincey b.; Thomas Love Peacock b.; Lady Caroline Lamb b.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>Signing of the American Constitution; Schiller’s <em>Don Carlos</em>; Mozart’s <em>Don Giovanni</em>.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kant’s <em>Kritik der praktischen Vernunft</em> (Critique of Practical Reason); <em>The Times</em> first published.</td>
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<td>1789</td>
<td>First colony established in Australia; Fall of the Bastille, 14 July; the beginning of the French Revolution; George Washington becomes first President of United States; Edmund Kean b.; Jeremy Bentham’s <em>Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation</em>.</td>
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<td>1790</td>
<td>Edmund Burke, <em>Reflections on the Revolution in France</em>; Adam Smith, author of <em>Wealth of Nations</em> (1776), d.</td>
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<td>1791</td>
<td>Death of Byron’s father, John Byron.</td>
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Chronology

1792
Percy Shelley b.; Samuel Rogers’ *Pleasures of Memory, with Other Poems*; Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Women*; Tom Paine escapes to France whilst British government prepares for his treason trial.

1793
Louis XVI executed; John Clare b.; Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.


1794
Edward Gibbon d.; Gifford’s *Baviad*; Godwin’s *Caleb Williams*; Southey’s *Fall of Robespierre*; Radcliffe’s *Mysteries of Udolpho*.

1795
John Keats b.; Thomas Carlyle b.; James Boswell d.; William Blake’s *Book of Los*; *Book of Ahania* and *Song of Los*; Southey’s *Joan of Arc*; John Murray, Byron’s future publisher, succeeds to his father’s business.

1796
Robert Burns d.; Coleridge’s *Poems on Various Subjects*.

1797
Franz Schubert b.; Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (Shelley) b.; Mary Wollstonecraft d.; Horace Walpole d.

Inherits title, Lord Byron of Newstead and Rochdale and moves to Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire.

1798
*Lyrical Ballads* published anonymously; Malthus’s *Essay on the Principle of Population*; the Irish rebellion.
1799
Byron travels to London. His club foot is examined by Dr Baillie and Dr Laurie. Byron enters Dr Glennie’s school in Dulwich.

Thomas Jefferson becomes second President of the United States; coup d’état in France sees Napoleon seize power.

1800
Second edition of Lyrical Ballads published with Wordsworth’s preface; Haydn’s The Seasons; Alessandro Volta describes the voltaic ‘pile’ to Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society.

1801
Byron enters Harrow.

Peace of Amiens; William Pitt resigns as Prime Minister; the Act of Union with Ireland receives royal assent; invention of the steam-powered locomotive.

1802
War between Britain and France ends.

1803
Byron’s mother moves into Burgage Manor, Southwell. In October, Byron begins his unrequited idealised love for his cousin, Mary Chaworth.

After Napoleon breaks peace treaty, Britain declares war on France; US pays $15 million to France for the Louisiana Territory.

1804
In Southwell, meets Elizabeth Pigot; returns to Harrow and takes part in the Speech Day.

Sir Walter Scott, Lay of the Last Minstrel; Schiller’s Wilhelm Tell.

1805
Byron takes part in Harrow’s Speech Day. In Harrow cricket team for their match in London, 2 August. Byron arrives at Trinity College, Cambridge.

Napoleon proclaimed king of Italy. Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson dies at Trafalgar; Beethoven’s Eroica symphony first performed; Joseph Turner’s The Shipwreck.
### Chronology

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<td>1806</td>
<td>Fugitive Pieces published.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Stuart Mill b.; publication of Bowles’s edition of Pope.</td>
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<td>1807</td>
<td>Poems on Various Occasions published, January. Keeps tame bear at Cambridge; joins Cambridge Whig club; returns to London, July; Byron’s review of Wordsworth’s Poems in Monthly Literary Recreations; Hours of Idleness published.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>William Pitt d.; The Abolition Bill is passed, outlawing the slave trade; Crabb’s The Parish Register; Thomas Moore’s Irish Melodies; Mme De Staël’s Corinne; first gas-lights in streets of London.</td>
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<td>1808</td>
<td>Received his MA from Cambridge; receives scathing criticism from the Edinburgh Review.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Start of the Peninsular War; the United States bans the import of slaves; Convention of Cintra signed; Leigh Hunt founds The Examiner; Goethe’s Faust (Pt. i); Goya’s Execution of the Citizens of Madrid.</td>
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<td>1809</td>
<td>Takes seat in House of Lords; anonymous publication of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers; Byron leaves Falmouth on the Princess Elizabeth to begin his first tour of Portugal, Spain, Malta, Albania and Greece. Reception by Ali Pasha. Byron finishes the first canto of Childe Harold</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Charles Darwin b.; Alfred Tennyson b.; Thomas Paine d.</td>
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<td>1810</td>
<td>Completes Childe Harold Canto II.</td>
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<td>On 16 April, Byron attempts to swim across the Hellespont but fails because of cold weather and strong currents. Successfully swims the Hellespont, 3 May.</td>
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<td>Baillie’s Family Legend; Hogg’s Forest Minstrel, Goethe’s Pandora; H. von Kleist’s Käthchen von Heilbronn.</td>
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Moved by hearing of the death of John Edleston, Byron writes poems addressed to ‘Thyzra’. Hears Coleridge lecture. Death, on 1 August, of Byron’s mother, Catherine Gordon. He writes ‘Hints from Horace’ and The Curse of Minerva.

Shelley expelled from Oxford, marries Harriet Westbrook; the Prince of Wales becomes Regent; Luddite Sense and Sensibility; Sense and Sensibility; Luddite riots.


Robert Browning b.; Charles Dickens b.; Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons. US declares war on Great Britain; Beethoven meets Goethe; Napoleon invades Russia

Lionised by London society; politically active in Whig cause; Byron attends dinner at Lady Jersey’s and meets Madame de Staël; speaks in the House of Lords; possible affair with half-sister, Augusta; publications of The Giaour, and The Bride of Abydos.

Hobhouse’s A Journey Through Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople; Austen’s Pride and Prejudice; Robert Southey becomes poet laureate; Leigh Hunt imprisoned.

Publication of The Corsair and Lara. 10,000 copies of The Corsair sold in a day. Byron admires Edmund Kean’s performance in Richard III.

Napoleon abdicates; Scott’s Waverley.
Chronology

1815
Byron marries Annabella Milbanke on 2 January. Birth, 10 December, of daughter, Ada. Publication of Hebrew Melodies, containing many of Byron's best-known lyrics. Riots in London against the Corn Law; restored Bourbon monarchy in France under Louis XVIII; Napoleon escapes Elba; British victory at Waterloo.

1816

1817
Claire Claremont (Mary Shelley's half-sister) gives birth to Byron's illegitimate daughter, Allegra; publication of Manfred; Newstead Abbey sold to Thomas Wildman for £94,500; visits Rome and Childe Harold Canto iv written. Jane Austen d.; Keats' Poems; the 21-year-old Princess Charlotte dies in childbirth; Coleridge's Biographia Literaria; Heman's Modern Greece; Scott's Rob Roy; Monroe becomes President of USA; Blackwood's Magazine founded.
1818

Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein; Percy Shelley’s Ozymandias and Revolt of Islam; Thomas Love Peacock’s Nightmare Abbey; Hazlitt’s Lectures on the English Poets; Keats’s Endymion; Caspar David Friedrich’s Wanderer above the Sea of Fog; attack on Keats in Quarterly Review.

Begins affair with Countess Teresa Guiccioli. Writes the Prophecy of Dante; leaves Venice for Ravenna; arrives in Ravenna; Mazeppa is published with the Ode on Venice. Don Juan Cantos i and ii published anonymously by John Murray. Accompanies Thomas Moore to Venice. Gives Moore his memoirs.

Wordsworth’s Peter Bell and The Waggoner; Shelley’s Masque of Anarchy; the Peterloo massacre in which 11 are killed and over 500 injured; US purchases Florida from Spain.

1820
Moves to Ravenna; Teresa Guiccioli separates from her husband; Byron sends Murray Cantos iii and iv of Don Juan; Pope grants Teresa Guiccioli separation; Byron begins Canto v of Don Juan.

George III dies; George IV proclaimed king; Shelley’s The Cenci; Keats’s Lamia, Isabella, and Hyperion; Shelley’s Prometheus Unbound published; Scott’s Ivanhoe; Venus de Milo discovered on Greek island of Melos.
Chronology

1821

Byron follows Teresa Guiccioli’s exiled family to Pisa; Byron begins his ‘Ravenna Journal’; *Marino Faliero* published 21 April; writes *Sardanapalus*, *The Two Foscari*, and *Cain*, all of which are published in a single volume on 19 December; writes *The Blues*; writes *The Vision of Judgment*; begins *Heaven and Earth*.

Napoleon d.; Keats d. (aged 25); Queen Caroline d.; Baillie’s *Metrical Legends*; Hazlitt’s *Table Talk*; Southey’s *A Vision of Judgement*; Michael Faraday demonstrates electro-magnetic rotation; Greek War of Independence begins.

1822

September, Byron moves with the Gambas to Genoa; daughter, Allegra, dies in convent at Bagnacavallo; Byron begins Canto xi of *Don Juan*; *Vision of Judgment* and *Werner* published; begins to write *Age of Bronze*.

Shelley publishes *Hellas*; Shelley drowns off the coast of Viareggio, Italy; Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, commits suicide; Heine’s *Gedichte*.

1823

Byron sails for Greece, July; arrives in Cephalonia on 3 August; *Heaven and Earth*, *Age of Bronze*, and *The Island* published.

Ann Radcliffe d.; Carlyle’s *Life of Schiller*; Lamartine, *Nouvelles Méditations*; Hazlitt’s *Liber Amoris* and *Characteristics*; Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9*.

1824

Byron arrives in Missolonghi, Greece on 5 January; develops fever; dies, aged 36, on 19 April; public attend Byron’s lying in state, 10 and 11 July; buried at Hucknall Church, England, 16 July.

James Hogg’s *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; Thomas Medwin’s *Journal of Conversations with Lord Byron*; Scott’s *Redgauntlet*; Southev’s *Book of the Church*.

1825

Dallas’s *Correspondence of Lord Byron*; Moore’s *Life of Sheridan* and *Evenings in Greece*; Hazlitt’s *Spirit of the Age*; John Quincy Adams becomes President of the USA; opening of the Stockton and Darlington railway in England.
ABBREVIATIONS

The following short titles have been used throughout this volume:

BLJ: Byron’s Letters and Journals, ed. by Leslie A. Marchand, 13 vols. (London: John Murray, 1973–94);